

## **AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**27 AUGUST 2024**

**Present:**

Councillors Morgan (Chair), Radford (Vice-Chair), Jackman, Thorne and Ryan

**Apologies:**

Councillors Purser, Jeffries and Steemson

**Officers in Attendance:**

Martin Flitcroft, Director of Corporate

Sue Heath, Audit Manager

Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

Beth Bowers, Grant Thornton Representative

### **22. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by Cllr Radford and seconded by Cllr Jackman that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

None

### **24. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

None

### **25. MEMBERS QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

None

### **26. AUDIT PROGRESS AND SECTOR UPDATE JUNE 2024**

The Grant Thornton Representative introduced the item to the Committee

The Committee briefly paused to read the backstop letter. The Committee were informed that the Audit backstop would be effectively 'cut off' in order to ensure future Audit work could be underway. The External Audit fee would increase but this would allow increased capacity in the team and ensure the audit would run smoothly. In response to a members query, it was confirmed that the 21/22 external audit report had come to Committee in March 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Radford that the report be noted.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

## **27. DRAFT ACCOUNTS**

The Director of Corporate introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee were informed that draft accounts would now be produced for late June which would benefit the process. There had been increases in interest rates in investments. The Committee were informed of various sources of capital and revenue. The Committee also discussed the pension deficit and the Audit of 'prior periods'. The MTFP and IRP were looking at Members allowances.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Radford that the Committee note the publishing of the Draft Accounts report and its appendices.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the Committee note the publishing of the Draft Accounts and its appendices.

## **28. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA) COMPLIANCE REPORT AND POLICY UPDATE**

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee were informed that the powers had only ever been used once and that they were only allowed to be used in specific circumstances, including magistrate approval. The use of RIPA powers must be overt, proportionate and as a final option.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Jackman that the Committee approves the updated RIPA Surveillance Policy and Procedures

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the Committee approves the updated RIPA Surveillance Policy and Procedures

**29. FINANCIAL INSTRUCTION AND CONTRACT RULES WAIVERS**

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

It was explained to the Committee when waivers are used.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Jackman that the report be noted.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

**30. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Thorne that the meeting exclude press and public and move into Part 2 as per paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

The meeting then moved into Part 2.

**31. FRAUD RISK ASSESSMENT 2024**

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

The Committee discussed the Fraud Risk prevention process and were given examples. It was suggested that a reminder be put in the Members and Officers Newsletters on the importance of updating registers of interest and declaring any interests if necessary .

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Radford that the report be noted.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

**32. PART I ITEMS SUGGESTED FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC INCLUDED**

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Radford that any press and public be readmitted to the meeting and the meeting move back into Part 1.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

The meeting then moved back into Part 1.

**33. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN AND CHARTER 2024-2025**

The Audit Manager introduced the item to the Committee.

Devon Audit Partnership had been involved in the internal audit as with previous years. It was suggested that a monitoring report become a standing item for the Committee. The Committee were informed that not every element of the Council is audited every year. They were also informed on how risks and their mitigations were tested. Monthly risk checks are undertaken for Cybersecurity. Monthly reports are provided to the Senior Leadership Team on risks.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Jackman that the Committee approve the Audit Plan and Charter.

A vote was taken – all were in favour.

Resolved

That the Committee approves the Audit Plan and Charter.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and finished at 12.17 pm.

Chair  
Cllr Sally Morgan